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Monitoring Report

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'DIPLOMATIC DEADLOCK'

RTV BiH versus the Croat Media

'Left to live off crumbs' - *Slobodna Dalmacija's* view of what TV BiH offers to non-Bosnjak audiences was the most graphic of many complaints in the Croat media. Croat stories get the same amount of attention, this paper said, as 'a basket-ball match between the NBA league and Albania'. Widely varying interpretations of the attack on Bosnjak returnees in Jajce, and British Foreign Minister Robin Cook's message about internal corruption, emphasised the gulf between the media of the Federal partners.

'The stumbling block for the implementation of the Dayton Accord lies in the question of Federal diplomacy, the secret Bosnjak police Agency for Investigation and Documentation, and the current organisation of TV BiH which is conducting an anti-Croat campaign.' (22/7) This comment by the presenter of Croatia Radio Television's newscast was relayed locally by Medjugorje-based Croatian Television Herceg-Bosna.

Split-based daily paper *Slobodna Dalmacija*, widely read in Croat-majority areas of the Federation, calling the

media situation a 'diplomatic deadlock' (July 25), added: 'The Bosnjak media always weight a story so that it goes in a direction useful to the Bosnjaks, and the other two nationalities are left to live off the crumbs which they leave behind. Some Bosnjak leaders take the same approach.'

A follow-up article on July 26 headlined 'RTV BiH the Bosnjak way' said 'On RTV BiH no other language except Bosnjak is at all present, in the regulations concerning language, and when statistics are made about the treatment of Islamic culture, all stories about Croats...get the same amount of attention as would an NBA league basket ball match with Albania, for the sake of the devotees of Islamic culture.'

Meanwhile Republika Srpska Radio-Television (SRT) issued an impassioned defence of RS media professionalism (30/7). It quoted Svetlana Siljegovic, Minister of Information in the RS government, complaining about 'the continuous satanisation of the Serb people in the media of the Muslim-Croat Federation.'

Although monitoring RTV BiH produced no evidence of 'satanisation'

of either Croats or Serbs, the official Bosnian state media newscasts did tend to differ in emphasis from independent productions such as OKO 22 (TV 99) and TV INFO (TVIN). Three particular stories - the expulsion of 500 Bosnjaks from Jajce, the attack by Srebrenica refugees on 14 Serbs visiting the Sarajevo suburb of Vogosca, and the statement of Robin Cook, supply examples.

'THEY DON'T HAVE TO WALK HOME'¹

Ironically, TV BiH's Dnevnik, like its independent counterparts OKO 22 and TV INFO, ran an almost euphoric story (27/7) on Bosnjak returns to Jajce. Quoting Croat-nationality Federation president Vladimir Soljic, as well as his Bosnjak deputy Ejup Ganic, TV BiH spoke hopefully of the bright-seeming prospects of returnees to the city.

¹ Quote from Croat Radio Herceg-Bosna, on the offer of buses to returnees fleeing Jajce.

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On August 3, however, the expulsion of 500 Bosnjaks, and the death of Hazim Sahman in the nearby village of Psenik were presented with no such impartiality. Camera coverage was guarded - the Jajce story ran for two days under the same view of smoking buildings and an SFOR tank. These pictures were repeated over and over, as the background to commentary consisting exclusively of Bosnjak quotes. The latter included BiH Refugee Minister Rasim Kadic remarking that the attack took place just 'after the visit of a high-ranking HDZ (Croatian Democratic Union) official to Jajce.'

On the 4th, TV BiH tried to get Soljic to talk, but he refused to appear on camera, so his comments were read out. Soljic chose, meanwhile, to appear on OKO 22. TV BiH reporter Nadja Ridzic, speaking from Travnik, told viewers that 'allegedly self-organised Croat civilians' were responsible for the expulsion of 'around 700 Bosnjaks'. Ridzic added that the discovery of the body of Hazim Sahman 'negated the statement of the Croat side that the murder never happened.' No statements by any 'Croat side' had, in fact, been carried.

However, compared with RTV BiH, Bosnian 'Croat Radio Herceg-Bosna' differed a great deal more, on the topic of Jajce, from the accounts of the independent media. (It also differed steeply from international community accounts of the episode.)

A day before any other Federation media observed the situation had deteriorated, Radio HB's August 2 presenter Mijo Kelava, and reporter Meri Zlatovic had the following news. 'Residents of Hrvoj's City (a former Jajce Croat hero) spontaneously gathered wishing to express their dissatisfaction in a peaceful way, over the disastrous, unplanned, and unagreed return of Bosnjaks throughout the municipality, and the generous support and help provided to them by the international humanitarian organisations, who, by this example prove their exclusive bias in favour of this particular people (Bosnjaks)...Representatives of Jajce municipal authorities believe that the return was managed by Bosnjak authorities, who again chose the policy of producing a "fait accompli".'

At the end of this report Zlatovic quoted the president of the Jajce municipal council, Mr Lucic, who stated

that the authorities 'could not be held responsible for the possible reactions of Jajce residents' to the 'unagreed' returns.

On August 3, when the news of the expulsion of around 500 people was just breaking on other Federation media, the same news team told listeners that the situation was now calming down. 'Bosnjaks who irresponsibly returned to Jajce are peacefully leaving their villages and municipal authorities of Jajce are trying to provide them with buses to return, so that they don't have to walk home.' The story did not appear again, and no comments on it were carried.

Slobodna Dalmacija, meanwhile had what it felt was a significant question: 'Just think, what might have happened if a thousand Croats all of a sudden arrived, for example, in Bugojno?' (6/8, page 7).

Given such a *tour de force* by the Bosnian Croat media, the problems of RTV BiH seem tame by comparison. However, RTV BiH has an international reputation to protect, and its name of state medium to justify.

VOGOSCA VIOLENCE

Two days before the Jajce incident, TV BiH prime time news presenter Belmin Karahmedovic failed to mention the August 1 attack by Srebrenica refugees on a group of 14 Serbs visiting their former homes in the suburb. It was left to OKO 22 and TV INFO to inform viewers, which they did in detail.

On August 2 Senad Hadzifejzovic presented the story as third item in the TV BiH news (after High Representative Carlos Westendorp's announcement of sanctions to follow infringement of the Sintra Declaration, and after the Main Committee meeting of the SDA). 'In the Vogosca region...a hostile scene was played out...a few hundred refugees from Srebrenica gathered and made a very stormy protest.'

Pictures labelled YESTERDAY'S FILM showed the protesters pushing against a cordon of police, but did not have any of the footage, carried by TV INFO and OKO 22, of the protesters stoning the Municipal building in which the threatened Serbs took shelter. TV BiH camera focus was on the police,

who, viewers learned, were congratulated by IPTF for their excellent behaviour. The Serb visitors were never remotely visible.

Radio BiH of August 2 carried, in fifth place, the official Ministry of Internal Affairs report, and nothing else. On the 3rd, reporter Mirela Hukovic-Hodzic sympathetically explained the motivation of the protesters - 'they cannot understand why they are not allowed to visit their own homes in Srebrenica' - but was silent on the feelings of the Serb visitors.

LONG-FINGERED POLITICIANS

Robin Cook's speech about the disappearance of BiH's aid money due to internal corruption among BiH leaders, also produced some uneasy responses from RTV BiH. Presenter Midheta Bicakcic (27/7) announced, then failed to show, the Liberal Bosnjak Organisation's reaction to Cook's speech, as carried by *The Sunday Times*. (When it came out in *Oslobodjenje*, July 29, it proved very unfavourable to the government.) On July 31 TV BiH reported extensively on an SDA (the ruling Party of Democratic Action) press conference, in which it was said that Cook was 'a victim of misinformation, and that his statement 'goes straight into the hands of the enemies of BiH.' Two days on, presenter Senad Hadzifejzovic had a cryptic comment: 'Those guilty of enriching themselves illegally should not be looked for just among a certain group, but among everybody, and both locally and abroad' (2/8).

Bosnian Croat media, meanwhile, displayed no uncertainty as to the real target of Cook's accusations. Croat Radio Herceg-Bosna's presenter Mijo Kelava told listeners on July 21 'How the Bosnian politicians and leaders from Sarajevo stole a million dollars'. Next day the story went on: 'In Sarajevo, there is great dissatisfaction among citizens because of the corruption of the Muslim politicians who stole great cartloads of money...' (28/7).

The story continued a third day, with the commentary of presenter Ivan Kristic: 'Well-informed journalists have found out from reliable sources that certain Muslim officials have stolen around 15 million dollars of money

intended for the reconstruction of the devastated BiH. The long-fingered Muslim politicians, not content with spending major sums of money exclusively in the area controlled by the Muslim army - pretentiously named the BiH Army - stole in this well-known petty thief manner' (29/7).

This marked cynicism embraced the Federal partnership (29/7) - Ivan Kristic went on to add 'In the Zemaljski Museum in Sarajevo... the three-member Presidency of BiH met and were supposed to have decided on the reconstruction of BiH diplomacy - which, so far, is mainly Muslim.'

The Federation was again the target of cynicism two days later (1/8), when Kristic was again the presenter - 'In the entire, united and sovereign BiH, most authority is held by High Representative Carlos Westendorp, which is, of course, completely in accordance with Bosnian-Herzegovinan.. sovereignty... The delayed sitting of the Council of Ministers was not held today, because the Ministers from the Serb entity had work which took precedence over taking their seats in the Museum....in other words, the state matches the Parliament and the Ministers exactly, and everybody gets what they deserve.'

Negative views of the Federation were not the monopoly of the Bosnian Croat media. Croatia Television commentators seemed to share them: 'Like a boomerang, the self-styled success of operation 'Tango' is returning, for it will be used as a means of putting pressure on Croats, while in the meantime Muslim crimes are not being mentioned, as if they never participated in the war,' said the Dnevnik presenter (21/7). The reporter on the trial of Tihomir Blaskic in The Hague, ended by declaring 'Croatia will never accept a revised Dayton or a unified BiH' (3/8).

WINE AND WATER IN MOSTAR

On a local scale, this cynicism about Federal integrity appeared on the West side of Mostar, in the commentary of Croat TV Mostar presenter Veselko Cerkez. (The subject was the union of the Hercegovacko-Neretvanski Canton police.) 'Allow me to say, esteemed viewers, that to me the police looks more and more like watered-down wine' (22/7).

While Croat TV Mostar's counterpart, TV Mostar, was busy broadcasting the objections of international representatives to Croat proposals to unify Mostar's Croat-majority municipalities, Cerkez ignored them. The subject was only covered through his commentary on Dragan Gasic, spokesman for the High Representative's Mostar office. (Gasic was accused last month, by Croat TV Mostar, of prejudice against the Croat nation.) 'Today, again, Dragan Gasic..had his show; he specifically used today's press conference to again declare the joining of Croat municipalities illegal' (22/7).

Cerkez aimed his suspicions in another direction a few days later, apologising to viewers because 'we still don't have any information on the list of all the officials of Federation BiH who made fortunes by various machinations,' adding the warning, 'it should not be forgotten that the project of the international community aimed at ..bringing to life the Federation, we ourselves feel to be more like an empty...sweet...or a castle in the air' (29/7).

Veselko Cerkez was at his most scathing, however, when describing for his audience a TV Mostar documentary, created by TV Mostar's director and editor-in-chief, Alija Behram, about the Serb poet Misa Maric. 'Obviously, this is about Yugoslavia and Yugoslavs. And a Yugoslav, no matter where on the earthly globe, always dreams of his 'Yuga'. As soon as two come together, they build one from imaginary ideals.' Cerkez graphically described how 'Alija Behram ..met with 'the living Tito' (Maric) and the public, by way of Muslim TV Mostar, was presented with excerpts from this event, filled with green, Mr Behram, Hyde Park, and rosy blushes caused by desire and passion for old-style Mostar' (22/7).

Belying Cerkez' accusation of 'Muslim', TV Mostar itself carried a warm and friendly interview with a Bosnian Croat policeman, who, due to the unification of the police, was returning home: 'We are a little excited we are going to our houses; we are all from Bijelo Polje and we are going to Bijelo Polje; its our community, our folks. We are all going there to see how our colleagues will accept us, and I hope everything will be fine' (21/7).

TV Zenica, meanwhile, should be noted as having evenly and unemotionally

reported on an issue to which Federation reporters and presenters often bring marked bias - a disagreement between HDZ members and Bosnjaks in a joint institution (in this case the Zenicko-Dobojski Cantonal assembly). When 11 Croat members walked out of the assembly, having failed to reach an agreement on the Cantonal flag and shield, reporter Dzenana Sivac said 'The Croat members asked that the decision.. be deferred to a working commission.. This suggestion was rejected by vote, and later the HDZ representatives left the assembly.' Then commentary was provided by an HDZ member, Nikola Antunovic, who gave it as his opinion that the current shield does not adequately represent the Croat constituents of the Canton.

TONED DOWN: MEDIA IN THE RS

Meanwhile, Srpska Radio Television seemed to be feeling besieged, for it issued, on July 30, an energetic defence of RS media professionalism. This led off with an attack - Information Minister Siljegovic's letter to the High Representative, complaining of 'The constant satanisation of the Serb people in the media of the Muslim-Croat Federation'. She added her defence of the RS media, who 'are being accused of a flow of racist texts.' The RS Media Council was quoted too: 'The state media of the RS are involved every day in producing a clear and politically professional profile.. they have faithfully carried and interpreted points of view and the policies of government institutions.'

What was noticeable this fortnight, moreover, was the softened-down approach of RS media to the international community. The object of searing commentary, during the previous monitored period, the international community met with further criticism, certainly, but it was mainly indirect - the quotes of hostile politicians. But, although heavily toned down, the picture of inimical foreigners siding with the Federation against Serbs as a race, was still present on Srpska RTV. 'At the donors' conference what we were expecting happened - the international community blamed the Republika Srpska for the failure of Dayton' (25/7) 'The anti-Serb power of the Commissioner of the European Union Hans van den

Broek dominated the donors' assembly, so it is not surprising that the EU continued to pressure the RS' (25/7).

BRCKO - 'NOT LYING DOWN'

Brcko continues to stand out as the site of some of the most uninhibited media commentary. Srpska RTV's Studio Brcko said 'It looks as if the official new world order was surprised by the number of 24 561 registered (Serb) citizens with the right to vote in Brcko, and that is the basic reason for the various pressures on Brcko.. those who are not registered, however, will not take this (the Provisional Election Commission's rejection of their appeals) lying down' (23/7).

A hidden international agenda was hinted at by SRT: 'The renewed registration of voters in Brcko apparently did not produce the desired effect, as far as the relevant international factors were concerned, for the turnout of Brcko citizens again reached 100 percent' (28/7). This was more explicitly stated by SRT Studio Brcko: 'the number of Serbs who registered was not in accordance with the scenario of a multi-ethnic Bosnia. In this context the approach of OSCE and the PEC (in rejecting approximately 3 500 appeals to register, by Serbs who did not have correct documentation)..should be interpreted' (23/7).

State-owned daily *Glas Srpski's* correspondent 'MN' was also suspicious about the international agenda in Brcko: 'We presume that the reason for (US Human Rights envoy) John Shattuck's visit is the previously-announced expulsion of 6 000 Serb families from Brcko, whom the supervisor intends to replace with Muslims' (29/7) (This refers to an interview Brcko supervisor Robert Farrand gave to Belgrade daily *Vecernje Novosti* in which he allegedly said that this was his intention. *Glas Srpski* admitted that he denied this, but headlined its next article 'Expulsion of Refugees?')

Compared with last fortnight's threats, however, none of this was very severe. Moreover, this studio carried, without commentary, an SFOR critique of SRT's unprofessionalism (1/8). (It was the only member of the SRT network to carry the criticism.)

'SOFT AS COTTON'

The state (or rather, entity) media's approach to RS President Biljana Plavsic, was also milder. Although she continues to be placed mostly third or fourth in the SRT news - items on President of the Presidency Momcilo Krajsnik always took precedence - criticism of her was again provided indirectly, through quotes. Srpska Radio news, for example, carried a letter which a group of women from the RS district of Romania, now living in Pale, sent to Plavsic. 'Soft as cotton in front of the international community, the foremost of whom call you 'iron lady' you didn't dare go to attend the funeral of our hero Simo Drljaca to look into the eyes of mothers, wives, sisters' (21/7).

SRT moved quickly to defend Radovan Karadzic, when it was Plavsic's turn to accuse. Illustrating the denial (by the RS Ministry of Health) of Plavsic's statement that Karadzic never visited wounded Serb warriors in the war, Srpska TV screened several minutes of archive material - Karadzic visiting soldiers (21/7).

The portrayal of the Federation, meanwhile, was murky. Scheduled, as usual, in the international news bloc, a string of negative events - the expulsions from Jajce, registration problems in Glamoc, Kakanj, Livno - all got covered on the same day (3/8). 'Swaggering and drunk, staggering all over the road' was how the reporter described Croats blocking the Jajce-Banja Luka road.

SRT also carried a story of an alleged forced entry by soldiers of Army of BiH in the 'Serb village of Cvjetuca near Dobo' (31/7). (United Nations spokesman Alexander Ivanko called this pure imagination, but SRT said nothing of his rebuttal.)

THE WRITING ON THE WALL

While manipulation of news through scheduling, quotes and selective coverage continued, the significant reduction in editorial commentary has to be seen as a positive step taken by the official media of the RS in this period. In addition, an encouraging piece of journalism was produced by one of *Glas Srpski's* reporters - on an incident which could easily have been manipulated to promote

hatred. When Arab language graffiti was found on a house undergoing reconstruction in the Serb-controlled division of Brcko, the journalist consulted a Bosnjak construction worker for his opinion. The latter thought the writing was 'the work of lunatics', and promised it would be washed from the facade by his team (23/7).

THE MEANING OF 'INDEPENDENT'

The distinction between independent and alternative reporting often becomes blurred in BiH media. Media frequently call themselves independent while displaying strong partialities. The Banja-Luka based 'Daily Independent News' (DNN), for example, virtually never sends a reporter to investigate, unless the topic is President Biljana Plavsic. She, and the opposition parties supporting her, are always treated sympathetically. Otherwise DNN is almost purely a vehicle for agency news (both official and independent RS and Federal Republic of Yugoslavia agencies).

Independent TV Banja Luka (NTV BL) also behaves like an alternative, rather than an independent medium. More than fifty per cent of every newscast in the monitored period was about Plavsic, who was always mentioned in a positive context. The RS Socialist Party was also privileged - it was mentioned 10 times, always positively, while the ruling Serb Democratic Party was mentioned 8 times, always in a negative context.

OKO 22, Independent TV 99's newscast, preferred Haris Silajdzic. Of his 18 appearances, 3 were in a positive context, and none were negative.

TV INFO was surprisingly aggressive in presenting an outlook critical of the international community - the first time *Monitoring Report* has ever recorded any such criticism. Presenter Azra Alimajstorovic (21/7) announced a report from Mostar about the meeting of representatives of The Association of Displaced and Refugee Croats, and the RS Association for Displaced persons and Refugees. The Bosnjak counterpart of these two organisations failed to participate. 'In BiH the right to return is being constantly violated: those to whom it matters want to go back. Ministries and humanitarian organisations create pilot

projects, and when the pilot has to eject, then the international community says, yet again, 'it's your responsibility', said Alimajstorovic. (Incidentally, TV INFO was the only non-Croat medium in BiH to provide full information on the meeting.)

'Do Politics Influence the Media' was one of the questions asked by NTV Banja Luka presenter Sanela Babic, on a special show titled 'Public Information in the RS, and its Role in Democratisation.' Guests were Brane Bozic, President of the RS Association of Journalists; Nikola Guzijan, editor-in-chief of *Banjalucke Novine*; Branko Peric, President of the RS Association of Independent Journalists; Nedjo Djelic, Director of RS official newsagency SRNA; and Nenad Novakovic, general manager of state-owned *Glas Srpski*. Unfortunately, an occasion which could have produced a challenging and fruitful discussion degenerated into personal sniping and accusations.

This was mainly due to the biased approach of Babic, who showed a tendency to champion Novakovic of *Glas Srpski* at the expense of the others, who were interrupted or had their statements finished for them. In particular, she interrupted Guzijan, when he was trying to explain his reasons for having resigned from his former position as editor in chief of *Glas Srpski*. When Novakovic made slighting remarks about the staffing of newly-established independent Banja-Luka based magazine *Reporter*, Babic chimed in with 'Yes of course.'

MONITORING REPORT PRESENTS - REPORTER

This Banja-Luka based weekly produced its first issue on May 20, 1997. Its founder and editor-in-chief is Perica Vucinic (38) whose working life was previously spent on the staff of Belgrade daily *Borba*, and independent weekly magazine *Vreme*, also Belgrade-based. *Reporter* is funded by the Helsinki Human Rights committee, and the Open Society Institute.

Reporter specialises in investigative journalism, and produces lively, provocative, irreverent pieces - the average age of its reporters is 24 - which never fight shy of offending local powers-

that-be. It also stands out for its coverage of non-political topics - music, black-marketing, even cattle-dealing in the zone of separation. (It is unique in the RS for producing a digest of each issue in English).

Reporter could be criticised for failing to sound like a BiH medium - some numbers read as if the magazine is based in Belgrade - and for some over-long articles which appear, unsuccessfully, to be trying to emulate the stories of magazines such as *Newsweek*, or *Time*. However, Perica Vucinic is looking to address at least one of these problems - he is trying to find journalists in the Federation who will write for him, and is also interested in setting up a cooperation and exchange relationship with a Federation-based medium.

Vucinic believes that almost all journalists dream of having their own medium one day. And, in spite of the problems that he faces - local printing, monopolised by *Glas Srpski*, is too expensive, and the magazine has to be printed in Belgrade - *Reporter's* sales so far justify an optimistic outlook. Since, by the time of its seventh issue, it already has 4000 readers, it clearly ranks with the best-selling alternative magazines in the Republika Srpska.

MEDIA MOMENTS

- Trouble With Maps

SRT reported on RS Premier Gojko Kljickovic paying a visit to Visegrad, 'Serbian Gorazde' 'Srbinje' (the RS name for Foca), Rudo and Cajnice. The story was presented as 'A visit to the municipalities of old Hercegovina.' (3/8)

The rejection of Brcko registration appeals elicited the following comment from Srpski Radio editor Visnja Bajic-Preradovic: 'Around 10 % of the voting body of the Republica will be affected by the decision that they have to vote on Federation territory' (29/7).

Slobodna Dalmacija trivialised Bosnjak concerns about the shading of the map which Croatia Television presenters use for the weather news 'Silajdzic's anxiety about the weather forecast'. (22/7) The map shows the BiH Federation coloured the same as Croatia, and the Republika Srpska the same colour as the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

- Carving The Cake

Croatia TV's presenter thought 'Bosnjaks are getting a disproportionately large slice of the cake, regarding reconstruction, repatriation and returns' (1/8).

SRT's presenter said, of the Donors' conference: 'it sets the scene for more equal treatment of the RS in the distribution of the donor's cake' (27/7).

- Dr Karadzic Dawns Again

The Doboj-based weekly magazine 'Svitanje', produced by the SDS-controlled municipal council, in its 1929 number (23/7) described the following spectacle: 'Doctor Karadzic dawns on this July morning on Serb land, in our streets, on posters, with his characteristic Mona Lisa smile. Many sighed with suppressed exclamations: "Here he is again among us"'

HERCEG-BOSNA'S MEDIA

by Goran Vezic

This will be a brief overview of media in the territory which until lately - through a mixture of geographic and political factors - was named 'the

Republic of Herceg-Bosna', and has recently been re-proclaimed as 'The Croat Community of Herceg-Bosna'. The most obvious factor to emerge immediately distinguishes the local media scene from that of the rest of the Federation, or, for that matter, the Republika Srpska: this is the absence of anything resembling free, uncontrolled media.

Another difference is the absence of a local-based daily paper. Four Croatia-published papers are distributed in the Federation - *Hrvatska Rijec*, *Tjednik*, *Slobodna Dalmacija*, and *Horizont*. None of these, however, is a Bosnian Croat product. (A further 28 publications are issued by various associations, together with 22 different varieties of religious pamphlets.)

Meanwhile, Bosnian Croat citizens, particularly those of Western Hercegovina, resort to Croatia's state and alternative press. A similar choice, with similar political implications, is often made by the audiences of electronic media. For although there are five TV stations altogether, in the four cities of 'Herceg-Bosna' - two in Mostar, and one each in Kiseljak, Ljubusko, and Tomislavgrad - their transmissions are limited in reach and duration. HRT has, therefore, the advantage, when it comes to range and reception quality. Its newscast 'Herceg-Bosna Kronika' is transmitted from the HRT station in Siroki Brijeg, and is the

nearest thing the area possesses to a Herceg-Bosna-wide local newscast.

There are, however, 28 radio stations spread throughout BiH, of which 25 are owned by government companies (i.e. affiliated to the locally-ruling HDZ). The biggest radio stations, for range and the number of people they employ, are Mostar-based Radio Herceg-Bosna, Radio Mostar, and Ljubuski Radio. The three private stations - 'Good Vibrations' in Mostar, 'Dupin' in Neum and 'Valentino' in Ravne-Brcko, are more commercially-run, and have no serious news programmes. Only a quarter of all stations have reasonably new equipment.

'Herceg Bosna' has its own news agency, HABENA, as well as a couple of Roman Catholic agencies, KTA and KIUM. None of these agencies could be described as independent.

'Herceg-Bosna' is left, therefore, in the unique position, of being the only state in Europe whose residents must reach across their semi-existent borders to obtain information which is independent or even alternative. They must also be unique in tuning to the official medium of a separate state to view their own news.